



# Permethrin Cream

## *What You Need to Know*

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*Deployment Medication Information Sheets (DMIS) are provided by the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM). Written for soldiers and their families, they provide basic information on deployment medications that are intended as guidance only; consult your health care provider for more information.*

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### **What is permethrin cream?**

Permethrin is an insecticide, in a low dose cream, that is used to treat scabies or head lice.

### **What are scabies and head lice?**

- Scabies is a contagious skin infection, caused by mites. It causes an itchy rash that may develop into sores.
- Head lice are tiny insects found on the scalp that can also cause severe itching.
- Scabies and head lice are spread by skin-to-skin contact between people and by sharing clothing, towels, and bedding.

### **How do I use the cream?**

- This medication is for use on the skin only.
- Apply this medication as soon as possible after it is prescribed.
- Use only the amount prescribed.
- Apply carefully to the affected area as directed avoiding the eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Massage into the skin.
- After 8 to 14 hours, wash off the cream.
- One application is usually all that is needed.
- Flush eyes with water immediately should the medication come into contact with your eyes.

Wash linen, clothes, etc. in hot soapy water prior to treatment to ensure you do not become reinfected.
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### **What does the military require?**

Permethrin cream may be required for use when on duty or deployed to environments with biting insects, especially if the insects are known to carry human diseases or there is an outbreak of scabies or head lice.

### **Are there any side effects?**

- You may experience itching, tingling, numbness, redness, or irritation. If these effects continue, inform your health care provider.
- Notify your health care provider if you develop a skin rash or burning or swelling of the skin.

### **Is there any reason I shouldn't use the cream?**

Tell your health care provider if:

- You have any illnesses or allergies.
- You're taking any over-the-counter or prescription medicine.

### **What if I'm pregnant or breast-feeding?**

- Permethrin should be used during pregnancy only when clearly needed. Talk to your health care provider about the risks and benefits.
- It is not known if permethrin appears in breast milk. Consult your health care provider before breast-feeding.

### **Where can I get more information?**

- Health care provider at your military treatment facility.

#### **DMIS Provided by:**

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<http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/dcpm/CDI/DMIS.htm>

